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# BUILDING LIVELIHOODS AND TRADE BY TURQUOISE MOUNTAIN TRUST (TMT)

NOVEMBER 2008 - NOVEMBER 2015

\$10.6 MILLION

## OVERVIEW

The objectives of the USAID-funded Building Livelihoods and Trade (BLT) were to provide education and training, economic opportunities, and livelihoods for Afghans. The seven-year (November 2008 - November 2015), \$10.6 million activity aimed to: 1) build economic and trade opportunities for Afghans through the economic, social and cultural regeneration of Murad Khane, a traditional commercial and craft neighborhood in the center of Kabul's Old City; 2) provide traditional craft education through the Turquoise Mountain Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture; 3) develop a market

for Afghan crafts domestically and internationally through business mentoring, marketing and sales support.

## ACTIVITIES

- Taught traditional Afghan crafts to a new generation of artisans through hands-on training
- Trained artisans in relevant business skills through supplementary classes
- Supported enrollment of 145 students (116 male and 29 female) in schools of woodworking, ceramics, calligraphy & miniature painting and jewelry and gem cutting

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established an internationally recognized brand, profiled in over 100 international publications, that sold almost \$3 million worth of Afghan crafts to markets in Asia, Europe, North America and the Middle East
- Enhanced Afghanistan's reputation as a source of high-quality products
- Provided direct education, employment and healthcare services to 64,246 Afghans, and indirectly reached approximately over 300,000 beneficiaries
- Provided supplementary education—including art and language classes—to a total of 122 children (68 boys and 54 girls) between the ages of five and 14
- Graduated 144 students (107 male and 37 female) from the Turquoise Mountain Institute over four years, of whom 24 percent owned their own craft businesses, 52 percent worked in craft-related employment, 13 percent were pursuing further studies, and 11 percent were not in formal employment
- Secured a \$650,000 commission for interior decoration of the five-star Anjum hotel in Mecca in 2014
- Received first prize in the art and crafts category of the national Technical and Vocational Education Training Expo in 2013
- Developed and launched the Institute Management Information System, a centralized system collating Turquoise Mountain Institute data on students
- Received UNESCO 2013 Asia-Pacific Award of Distinction for the restoration of the Great Serai, a 19th century merchant's palace in Murad Khane, which now serves as part of the Turquoise Mountain Institute
- Supported the establishment of seven new businesses for Turquoise Mountain Institute graduates in the Murad Khane complex.
- Restored 112 historic buildings in Murad Khane, including 47 in the bazaar, five in the Institute, and 59 residential buildings in the community. Also built 21 new structures, and improved 42 toilets
- Cleared a total of 33,457 cubic meters of trash from the streets of Murad Khane
- Provided full services—including city power and water—to all homes in the Murad Khane Community

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